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RESULTS OF TRAINING
Examples

1. Missouri Survey

Professional improvement is an active process. As such, it requires that each person on the Extension staff make a self-appraisal of training needs and interests as a starting point for improvement. In the training program we have been working toward a better way of assessing training needs. In April, the Training Branch of the Federal Extension Service prepared a check sheet to be used by State personnel in getting a picture of training needs and professional improvement plans of county and State staff as seen by the staff members themselves. This was discussed with State representatives at the 1955 Conference on Preservice and Graduate Training. A number of States have used this check sheet; Missouri has developed an inventory of its own. In that State a survey was made of all county personnel, specialists, and supervisors. Each person indicated the methods of work they needed to improve, the subject matter training they needed, and what plan they had for getting such training. As a follow-up on the survey, the State extension agents are now discussing with each agent individually his own sheet and are helping them to work out for themselves a definite schedule for professional improvement for the next 5 years. The time limit for completion of these individual conferences has been set for May 1, 1956.

2. North Carolina Program Planning Training

Three years ago the North Carolina home demonstration staff decided that the biggest problem facing them was to improve program planning procedures. A committee was appointed to make a study of existing program planning methods and time use. The purpose of the study was to take a look at the county programs to see if agents were spending their time on important things. There were 169 questionnaires completed by the agents. In May 1955, two-day district training meetings were held for county and State personnel. Agents worked on the following areas: (1) criteria for a good program; (2) getting and using facts in program development; (3) setting objectives and goals; (4) program planning procedure; and (5) evaluation.

In December 1955 a follow-up conference was held. District agents, specialists, and agents were asked to comment on program planning in 1955 from the viewpoint of the application of any of the training reviewed by agents in the workshop held in May 1955. The results of the survey were discussed.

The survey showed that:

- 91 out of 100 counties held program planning meetings in local clubs.
- 79.7% of the clubs in North Carolina had program planning meetings.
- 2/3 of all club members were involved in community planning meetings.
- 64.8% were involved in county planning meetings.
- 3,187 council members from 1,153 clubs were involved.

There was no bench mark survey with which to compare these figures, but the agents reported that this was a substantial increase in participation of people in planning.

Other gains they reported were:

Selection of more basic programs, more leader training.

3. Oregon Public Policy Developments

One of the county agents, Don Walrod, of Columbia County, had taken a public policy course at an extension summer school at Colorado a year or two ago. This past fall he wrote to one of the extension economists expressing his interest in Oregon undertaking more activity in the way of public policy education than the staff had been doing. The economist responded favorably to the idea and suggested the possibility of a get-together during the annual staff conference when any interested agents who had attended summer school public policy courses might gather with some of the central staff people and the head of the College Department of Agricultural Economics for discussion on this subject. Mr. Walrod sent a letter to four other agents on the staff whom he knew were interested in this subject and a meeting developed which was attended by six county agents together with the Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Marion Thomas, the Extension Agricultural Economics Information staff, and the assistant director.

The discussion was very pertinent and the agents were enthusiastic about the possibilities of undertaking some public policy educational work with local groups if they could be provided with some discussion guides and idea materials by Oregon State College. It was quite apparent that the interest of these agents in these topics was a direct outgrowth of their experience in the public policy course at summer school. They had gained enough confidence to be willing to undertake work in a new field.

It was agreed that the appointment of a steering committee here at the College was a necessary first step to see what might be developed in the way of activities in this field with present personnel. It is anticipated ultimately that the employment of a specialist in this field may be desirable.



